



Tempe Fire Department Safety Tip

Burn Prevention

In 2001, more than 800 children age 14 and under died and 47,000 were injured in residential fires. It is estimated that flames and burns are responsible for one-fourth of all fire-related deaths and injuries.

Approximately 75,000 children ages 14 and under are treated in hospital emergency rooms for thermal burn-related injuries, including flames and contact burns. Children age 14 and under account for nearly half of all emergency room treated thermal burns.

An average of 16 children ages 14 and under die and nearly 31,500 children are treated in hospital emergency rooms for scald burn-related injuries each year. Children ages 4 and under account for nearly all of these deaths and the majority of these injuries.

Among children ages 4 and under hospitalized for burn-related injuries, it is estimated that 65% are treated for scald burns and 20% for contact burns.

Understanding Burns -

There are seven common types of burns.

- *Flame burns*, caused by direct contact with fire.
- *Radiation burns*, caused by close exposure to fire or high heat.
- *Scalds*, caused by hot liquids or steam.
- *Contact burns*, the result of touching hot objects.
- *Chemical burns*, caused by contact with corrosive chemicals, such as battery acid.
- *Electrical burns*, caused by contact with live electrical wires.
- *Ultraviolet burns*, caused by overexposure to the sun or to sun lamps.

Prevention Tips

Cooking

- Keep children and pets away from cooking food. Enforce a "kid-free zone" around your stove. Turn pot handles inward. Never leave them sticking out where they could be bumped or grabbed by child.
- Test all heated liquid and food before giving it to a child or placing it within their reach.
- Remove tablecloths when toddlers are present in the home. They tug and pull on everything within reach. Hot liquids can easily be pulled down on them.
- Never hold a child while drinking a hot liquid.

- Be sure to inform baby-sitters about kitchen and appliance safety and teach them to prevent burn injuries when preparing meals.
- Purchase appliances with short cords, and keep all cords from dangling over the edge of counters, e.g. coffee pots, crock pots, deep fat fryers and anything else that could contain hot liquids.
- Use caution when moving heavy pots of hot liquids from the stove.

Microwave Ovens

- Use only containers designed for microwave use.
- Be careful when removing coverings or lid from microwaved foods. Puncture plastic wrap before heating food in the microwave.
- Stir foods to distribute the heat.
- Extreme caution should be taken when heating baby bottles or baby food. Heating baby formula in a microwave is a dangerous practice and could result in a scald to the baby's mouth or throat. Even though the bottle might not feel warm to the touch after it has been microwaved briefly, there may be hot spots within the formula. Hot spots are places where the microwaves have reached first or more efficiently, producing uneven heating.

Hot Water

- Adjust your water heater's thermostat to no more than 120 degrees and install anti-scald devices in your bathtub and shower fixtures.
- Always turn on the cold water faucet first, then add hot.
- Supervise children constantly in bathtubs and near hot beverages.
- Before placing a child into the bath or getting into the tub yourself, test the temperature of the water by moving your hand rapidly through the water for several seconds. The temperature should not exceed 100 degrees. A child's delicate skin will burn more quickly than an adult's.
- Install an Anti-Scald device on your faucets. Check with your plumber regarding anti-scald devices that can be installed to stop water-flow when temperature is above 120° to prevent any scalding injury.

First Aid For Burns

Cool the burn: For first and second degree burns, cool the burned area - preferably with cool running water for 10 to 15 minutes. This lowers the victim's skin temperature, which stops the burning process, numbs the pain, and prevents or reduces swelling.

Third degree burns require immediate medical attention. Cool them only with wet sterile dressings until help arrives.

Remove jewelry or tight-fitting clothes from around the burned areas before swelling begins and, if possible, elevate the injured area.

Cover the burn: After a first or second degree burn has been cooled, apply a clean, dry dressing to the burned area.

Don't apply butter or any other grease (including medicated ointments) on a burn. Grease holds in the heat, which could make the injury worse.

Don't break blisters: This could allow germs to enter the wound.

Treat for shock: To reduce the risk of shock, keep the victim's body temperature normal. Cover unburned areas with a dry blanket.